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MR. DANNREUTHER ON RICHARD WAGNER.

THE series of interesting papers which appeared some time since in these columns on the theories and tendencies of the most distinguished of living German musicians has been re-published in the form of a pamphlet, with considerable additional matter. We have reason to know that the articles on their first publication excited considerable attention; and we feel sure that their re-issue in a more complete form will be welcome to all who take an interest in the artistic problems which Wagner has mooted, and which in Germany are occupying so large a portion of the attention of the musical public. We propose in the present article to glance at a few of the conclusions at which Mr. Dannreuther arrives, adding such remarks of our own as may help to further elucidation of the subject.

In the first section of his pamphlet, Mr. Dannreuther propounds the problems which Wagner has set himself to solve. His writing is already so concise as to render further compression a task of great difficulty; while the quotation of detached sentences, or even paragraphs, where all are so closely connected, gives but an inadequate idea of the whole. In this respect, indeed, our author's writings are not unlike Wagner's music. There is a logical sequence of ideas which renders the detaching of a separate fragment not unlike the procedure of the simpleton of old who carried a brick about as the sample of a house. We must, however, venture on a few extracts, and refer our readers for fuller explanations to the pamphlet itself.

Speaking of the aims which Wagner proposes to himself, Mr. Dannreuther says—

"His sanguine hopes for the artistic future of Europe are based, on the one side, upon a universal social regeneration, and, on the other, upon the extraordinary and altogether unprecedented development *music*—which as we understand it was entirely unknown to the Greeks—has made in the last three centuries. It is the wonderful and apparently limitless capacities for emotional expression Beethoven has given to the art, that have opened to Wagner vistas of dramatic possibilities such as the ancient world can have had no conception of.

"His great problem then, or rather the problem of the art-work of the future, as he calls it, somewhat like the social problem of Comte, is this: How can the scattered elements of modern existence generally, and of modern art in particular, be united and interfused in such wise that their rays, issuing from all and every side, shall be concentrated into one luminous focus so as to form an adequate expression of the vast whole, with its eager impulse and enhanced aspirations, its violent convulsions and paroxysms of pain, its love, joy, and humanitarian faith? This is the first instance. And secondly: What hope of a reaction in favour of nobler, richer, and higher forms of social and individual life than our present wretchedly prosaic industrialism would the creation and acceptance of such a work of art hold out?

"Wagner, standing upon Beethoven's supreme achievement, is, from the musician's starting-point, trying to do that for the drama which neither Goethe nor Schiller succeeded in, though their ideal tendency certainly culminated in that direction—i.e., to make it independent of all purely intellectual motives and elements, and to construct it so that it shall appeal and speak at once direct to the feelings of all men of poetical perception, without standing in need of an elaborate mental preparation. It need hardly be added that it is only with the aid of music—that is to say, music in its full maturity, and with its almost superhuman powers of emotional expression, as Beethoven represents it—that such a thing can be accomplished; and it is this feat of leading the full stream of Beethoven's music into a *dramatic* channel, so that it shall fulfil and

complete the poetical intentions of a dramatist, that constitutes the principal act of Wagner's genius.

"The incalculable importance of an artistic form, such as is here shadowed forth, would of course consist in the fact that, being free from the restraint of narrow nationality, it might become universally intelligible. As regards literature, the attainment of this quality is out of the question by reason of the diversity of European languages; but in music, the language understood by all men, we possess the requisite equalising power which, resolving the language of intellectual perception into that of feeling, makes a universal communication of the innermost artistic intuitions possible; more especially if such communication could, by means of the plastic expression of a dramatic performance, be raised to that distinctness which the art of painting has hitherto claimed as its exclusive privilege."

The second section of the pamphlet contains an interesting historical sketch of the development of the opera, as traced by Wagner in his work "Oper und Drama." After noticing the various reforms introduced by Gluck and his successors, by Mozart and Weber, and the melodic element so freely developed by Rossini and other Italian composers at the expense of dramatic truth, the following conclusion is arrived at:—

"And we are constrained to admit the incapacity of music unaided by other arts to construct the drama out of its own means, and to assert for the future that music must forego part of its pretensions, and in case of dramatic necessity, merge its individuality in the great end of all the arts combined—the drama."

The following chapter is devoted to a demonstration of the fact that the drama alone, unaided by music, must be to a certain extent imperfect, and that, as our author expresses it, "Dramatic poetry may hope to find its salvation in a close union with music." Mr. Dannreuther traces the career of Goethe and Schiller as dramatic writers, and points out how the two principal "factors" (to use his own word) of post-renaissance plays—the romantic legend or more modern novel, and the Greek drama of Aristotle, that is, as defined in his "Poetics"—are both in certain respects incomplete and inadequate. He aptly reminds us that "the dramatic works of our noblest poets—take Browning as an instance—are certainly not fit to be acted; and our acting plays, though we may accredit them with all manner of virtues, are as certainly not poetical." He points out, moreover, that "the opera has not only absorbed the interest due to the spoken drama, but has actually exercised the most deteriorating influence on the character of theatrical performances generally." He concludes this part of the subject thus:—

"Let the admirers of the spoken drama say what they will, it is undeniable that it has been outstripped in public favour by the opera, and it is more than probable that the opera is destined to furnish the seed from which a veritable ideal drama will spring up. The noble music of a great master lends to the performance of operatic singers of small natural gifts an indefinable charm, such as even the greatest actor cannot hope to exercise in the spoken drama. On the other hand, a genuinely gifted dramatic performer can enable very poor music to such a degree, that we get an impression stronger than any which the same gifted performer could by any chance produce without the aid of music. The mysterious might of the divine art lifts whatever it touches into a sublime sphere.

"If, then, the main object of the poetical career of Goethe and Schiller can be characterised as an attempt to discover the ideal subject-matter and an ideal form for the modern drama; and if, as Schiller in a very curious confession records it, with him the beginning of all poetical production was *eine musikalische Gemüthsstimmung* (a musical state of mind), which only after a time brought forth the poetical idea—pictures and words—if it is a fact sufficiently proved, best of all in a recent pamphlet by Professor Nietzsche, that the drama of Æschylos took its origin from the union of the older didactic hymns of the Hellenic priests with the newer Dionysian dithyrambos—that is to say, with poetry conceived and executed in the orgiastic spirit of musical sound—we may by analogy confidently conclude and expect that from out of the spirit of Beethovenian music, and of the manifold branches of Teutonic mythos, which

Wagner conceives to be the true subject-matter for the supreme work of art he has in view, an ideal dramatic form will emanate which will stand in relation to the spirit of modern existence as the drama of Æschylus stood in relation to the national spirit of Greece."

In the fourth section of his treatise Mr. Dannreuther defines with great clearness the salient points of the Wagner opera, as regards its musical form, verse, melody, and orchestration. He points out that "his drama has nothing whatever to do with the supposed reform of instrumental music, which has been dubbed 'the music of the future.'" Neither is it a reformation of the opera; as our author pithily puts it, "it is no more a reformed opera than man is a reformed monkey." It is in fact a thing *sui generis*, and must be judged, not by the ordinary canons of musical or dramatic criticism, but by the actual effect which in performance it will produce upon the audience.

To the last two chapters of this pamphlet we can only allude. They contain some general remarks on Wagner's theories, and a sketch of his life—both full of interesting matter, but which we pass over to consider the question which has doubtless been present to the minds of many of our readers—How far, as a matter of fact, are these new theories, revolutionary as in many respects they are, tenable?

To this question it is by no means easy to give a direct categorical answer. In the words of a homely proverb, "The proof of the pudding is in the eating." As a matter of fact, the knowledge of Wagner's theories and of his music are mutually indispensable to a full understanding of either.

While, on the one hand, there is much in his writings, and in Mr. Dannreuther's able abstract of them, which only becomes fully comprehensible when the music of his later operas lies before us, and we are able to see how he has actually reduced his own theories to practice, a knowledge of these theories, on the other hand, is hardly less necessary to render intelligible many parts of his music which otherwise would seem purposeless and altogether obscure. It is in his "Nibelungen" dramas that the composer's matured views receive their fullest development, and we advise those musicians who take an interest in these art questions to procure one at least, but, better still, all of these works, and see how this regeneration of dramatic music is to be carried out. Even with the aid of these scores the reader's imagination must still be considerably drawn upon. Let it be remembered that Wagner's musical dramas—we use the word advisedly in preference to "operas"—have absolutely nothing in common with other operas beyond the fact that the words are sung and not spoken. Instead of being a collection of airs, duos, and concerted pieces, strung together on any thread of a libretto which may present itself, they are well-considered works in which music, drama, and stage action mutually assist, instead of (to quote a recent German writer) "mutually incommoding" one another. We believe that Wagner's music has a great future before it, and that the time will come, though we can hardly venture to hope that it is yet near, when even in this country we may have the opportunity of testing for ourselves, by the performance of some of his later works, the value of his theories concerning dramatic music.

In conclusion we must express our best thanks to Mr. Dannreuther for his able and lucid exposition of a by no means easy subject. His pamphlet, though we certainly cannot call it "light reading," is remarkably clear; and the musical public of this country is indebted to him for the best if not the only thorough explanation of the views of one of the ablest and boldest thinkers of the present day.

NOTES ON THE TEXT OF BEETHOVEN.

BY EDWARD DANNREUTHER.

(continued.)

Balthazar. Note this before my notes,
There's not a note of mine that's worth the noting.
Don Pedro. Why, these are very crotchets that he speaks;
Note, notes, forsooth, and noting!—*Twelfth Night*, ii. 3.

SONATA, Op. 110, A flat. *Fuga.* After all the details given concerning the "Bebung" in the preceding Number, it can be hardly necessary to call attention to the divinely expressive bars in the "L'istesso tempo di Arioso" (12-16), which forms the intermezzo to the fugue, unless it be to furnish additional proof for our assertion that the first note of the "Bebung" should, and does always, stand in the position of a syncopation. The suggestion that, in bar 23 of the succeeding "L'istesso tempo de la fuga," the third quaver beat in the second part should be A flat, has been made more than once. First, by the late Ignaz Moscheles, who gave it to me, but has not inserted it in his editions; and, latterly by Von Bülow, who suggests it in a note with which I entirely concur. The tonality ensuing directly after, C minor, is thereby rendered much more distinct. The sonata, Op. 110, like Op. 101, is remarkable for the use of minute designations of tempo and expression in German by the side of Italian directions of similar import; and this fact throws strong light upon the extreme carefulness Beethoven gave proof of in his later days, as regards recording the correct and indisputable reading of his works.

It is true, that in some cases the Italian and German designations are absolutely identical in meaning; but in others again they illustrate one another, opening endless vistas, like a series of mirrors. Foreign terms in any language are apt in course of time to lose their signification, and to sink down to the level of mere conventionalities; which conventionalities, again, may change from generation to generation like fashions of dress. Beethoven's delicate intuition on this point was and is shared by Schumann and Wagner; and it appears well worth while to sacrifice conventional terms, be they Italian or any thing else, for the precise indication of a composer's intention delivered in his mother tongue.

Sonata, Op. 111, C minor. In the Leipzig edition this sonata is remarkably free from errors. If there be anything to indicate about it, it is to warn against the correction of supposed errors, such as I have designated under letter C of the second division of possible editorial stupidities:—"To take account of the older rules of musical grammar, and to be careful not to mistake such matter as is written with a view to the observance of these rules for misprints."

Herr Tappert, in one of the series of highly interesting articles on the Sonatas of Beethoven, already quoted, ("Musikalisches Wochenblatt," No. 27 for 1871), hints at various supposed emendations of the sort, which, if the principle they are based upon were adopted, would put an end to all sound criticism. He suggests, that according to the motivo (1) bar 24 of "Allegro con brio ed appassionato," the following 25th bar, that Beethoven would in our day have refused to trouble his mind about the forbidden *tritonius* D^b and A (which the strict sequence demands) and would not have written as the text really stands (2), and similarly, that in bars 58 and 59 counting from the end, Beethoven would not have altered the passage so as to avoid the rather unpleasant fifths, which, if the sequence were preserved, would be inevitable, but the composer has here and in many similar instances not so much been misled by a superstitious regard for old rules of musical grammar, as by his desire to avoid empty cacophony. There are plentiful cases in the later works

—say the final fugue of Op. 106 or the quartett fugue—in which he rides rough-shod over the *dicta* of theatrical wisecracks.

HENRY HUGH PIERSON.

THIS great musical genius was born at Oxford, on the 12th of April, 1816, his father, the Rev. H. N. Pierson (afterwards Dean of Salisbury and Chaplain to George IV.) being connected with St. John's College there. Of Pierson's early life but little is at present known, a want which his biography will doubtless supply. It is certain that he studied at Harrow, and at Trinity College, Cambridge, with the idea of taking medical degrees; his musical genius, however, appeared so conspicuously in six songs, written and published before he was eighteen, entitled "Thoughts of Melody," that he was placed under Dr. Attwood, at that time organist of St. Paul's Cathedral.

He pursued his musical studies afterwards under Dr. Rink, Reissiger, and others of the most eminent musicians of Germany. The first great event of Pierson's musical career was the production of his fine oratorio *Jerusalem* at the Norwich Musical Festival of 1852. This work was received, by all those competent to judge of such a conception, with the greatest enthusiasm, but was very unfavourably reviewed by a portion of the London press, to whom Pierson, as an artist of original thought, did not choose to bend. *Jerusalem* was also performed at Exeter Hall in May, 1853, and although received by the public, as at Norwich, with surprise and enthusiasm, the same portion of the critics condemned it; this injustice, acting upon a mind of extreme sensibility, had the effect of virtually expatriating Pierson, and was the primary cause of England's greatest composer passing the best part of his life in Germany, where he met with due appreciation on all hands. This is a subject which must cause regret in England, and yet we have the legacy of his works, in their peculiar walk unrivalled.

Pierson in this respect only shared the usual fate of genius; he says (in a letter to Mr. Theodore S. Hill), "Time is the great umpire, against whose decision there is no appeal. If a work has the principle of life in it, the real vital power, no opposition can destroy it, or cause it to be forgotten; and in the same way, if it does not contain that power, no efforts can prolong its existence beyond a certain period."

It should be mentioned that on the occasion of the first performance of *Jerusalem*, St. Andrew's Hall, Norwich, was crowded with an immense audience, whose attention was riveted throughout, whilst at the beautiful and touching number, "What are these" and "God shall wipe away" many persons were moved to tears. At the conclusion Pierson was loudly called for, and received an ovation.

The music to the second part of Goethe's *Faust* was produced at Hamburg in 1854, and established for Pierson a lasting reputation in Germany; this work contains some of the most charming fairy music ever written, and the wonderful chorus "Sound, immortal harp." A selection from the work was given at the Norwich Festival of 1857. Writing to Mr. J. F. Hill (the chorus-master and conductor at Norwich) respecting the performance, Pierson says, "Tell the ladies of the chorus (to whom my best compliments) to consider themselves *real downright fairies* in the first chorus, and undoubted *angels* in the two last!"

In 1865 Pierson was in London during the Handel Festival, and an energetic effort was made at this time by sundry eminent musicians to retain his genius for England, but "Time was still out of joint." This visit, however, was

not wholly without result, as many musical gems were brought over by Pierson to enrich the collections of his admirers; amongst which may be mentioned a fine setting of "Not a drum was heard," a work which, although dedicated to the British army, yet remains in MS. Were such a singer as Sims Reeves to perform this scena in public, accompanied by a fine orchestra, it would produce a sensation seldom seen, such is the depth and power of this emanation of genius!

Speaking of the oft-repeated charge of his "want of melody," Pierson says, "at Würzburg the soprano in the duet from *Jerusalem*, 'Sons of Strangers,' was so affected by what she called the 'tenderness of the music,' that her voice failed her at bar 8, and I was obliged to play that and the next bar on the harmonium, along with the clarinet. A Protestant clergyman at Hamburg, sent his wife and daughters to the theatre to hear that chorus of mine in *Faust*, 'Blossoms of amaranth,' that they might get an idea, as he said, of how angels sing (of course without melody!) But I am ashamed of all this; what I can least forgive my detractors is, that they force me to mention such facts, and to defend myself where there ought surely to be no call for self-defence." His letters abound with allusions to England and his exile from her, passages occurring which, in his biography, will one day cause surprise, grief, and indignation!

In 1869 Pierson was in Norwich superintending the performance at the Festival of a selection from a new oratorio, *Hesekiah*, a work also received by the public and real artists with enthusiasm, but written against by the same portion of the London critics: it is to be regretted that the work remains unfinished.

His most stirring and vigorous National Chorus, "Ye Mariners of England" was performed at the same Festival. This is a work so thoroughly English that it will be considered one of our greatest songs of heroism; it has a breadth, simplicity, and "go" that carry all before it. The exquisite chorus, "Sound, immortal harp," from *Faust*, was also given.

Pierson's last great work was the opera "Contarini," performed at Hamburg in April, 1872, with great success, Pierson being called before the curtain, and saluted with a fanfare of trumpets, whilst some one threw him a magnificent laurel-wreath, which, he says, in his humorous way, "I was not altogether sorry to pick up!" The musicians at Hamburg seem to have entered most heartily into the spirit of the opera, being much attached to Pierson for his *Faust* music. Pierson relates an amusing incident that occurred at one of the rehearsals. He says, "I wrote two overtures to the opera, in C and in B♭. The band (always specially interested about the overture, when there is one—which is *their* manor) got hold of both scores, and soon got into a mild contention about which of them should be given first; some preferred the one in C, others the one in B♭, at last they were getting up the steam rather too strong, when I happened to come in. So says I, 'Gentlemen, you seem at variance about something; can I be of any use in deciding the point?' Says the leader, 'I and a good many more of us want to play the overture in C, at the first performance, because we think it will make a greater impression on the general public.' 'All very well,' says Cello 1mo, and Tromba 1mo, 'but we ain't general public, and there are more of us who prefer the overture in B♭.' 'Best thanks for the honour you do me,' says I, 'but as there are two parties here, suppose we wait till both overtures have been fairly rehearsed, and then we can settle the point by taking votes.' Some of them murmured a bit, and proposed playing both overtures the first evening, viz., the second one as *entracte*. Possibly it may come to that after all, as with *Fidelio*." By way

of recreation (as he says) Pierson has composed a set of "Thirty Hymn Tunes," a second series of "Thirty-six do.," a "Te Deum in F," and in B♭, and an "Office for Holy Communion," which contain many gems, and are rapidly growing popular; they are published by Simpkin, Marshall, and Co.

Pierson married a German lady, and leaves three sons, the eldest of whom, Reginald, writes from Leipzig that his father "was taken away softly and peacefully." The funeral took place at Leipzig, on January 31st, but his remains were brought to England, and buried in the family vault at Sonning, on February 6th.

A Leipzig journal, referring to Pierson's death, speaks of him as "an artist who, far from following the beaten track of common-place life, strove unswervingly to pursue a lonely lofty path towards the goal which he proposed for himself."

In the *Graphic*, illustrated journal, of March 8th, appears a good likeness of our composer, and a short memoir. *Faust* is to be given at Leipzig about the 15th inst.

It is as well to add to the foregoing, that Pierson has written a large number of songs (with orchestral as well as pianoforte accompaniments), a branch of composition in which he will probably stand at least as high as Schubert. Of these Medora's song, "True Love," "Love's Vigil," "Those Evening Bells," "Mein Glück," and "The Churchyard," may be noted as good specimens of his style.

Leopold I., the late King of the Belgians, to whom Pierson's *Faust* (Zweiter Theil) is dedicated, awarded him the Gold Medal of Art and Science in recognition of the remarkable originality and grasp of thought displayed in that work.

At a performance of "Ye Mariners of England" at Osborne some years ago, on the conclusion of the piece the Queen immediately commanded a *da capo*.

THEODORE S. HILL.

[We regret to say that we have not seen enough of Pierson's music to corroborate our contributor's remarks from personal knowledge. We have, however, examined his *Jerusalem*, and were much struck with its originality. We certainly do not consider it open to the charge of "want of melody," but are rather inclined to think that its weak point is disregard of musical form. The impression it produced on us was that it was in many parts very fine, and sometimes also very incoherent. As our acquaintance with Pierson's music is confined to this single work, we think it best to give Mr. Hill the freest opportunity for expressing his own views.

Whether or not Pierson deserves the title of "England's greatest composer," is a question that Time alone can decide.—Ed. M. M. R.]

OVERTURE TO "DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER."

AS this remarkable work will shortly come to a hearing, not only at the next concert of the Wagner Society, but also at one of the Philharmonic Society, as well as at the Royal Albert Hall, it will perhaps be interesting to many of our readers to see Herr Wagner's own account of the poetical purport of the work, so far as it can be rendered into English. We purpose following it up by translations of his other "Programmatische Erläuterungen" (explanatory programmes) of the "Eroica" symphony, the overture to *Coriolanus*, the overture to *Tannhäuser*, and the prelude to *Lohengrin*.

Wagner has thus explained the poetical purport of the overture to *Der Fliegende Holländer* :—

Driven along by the fury of the gale, the terrible ship of the "Flying Dutchman" approaches the shore, and reaches the land, where its captain has been promised he shall one day find salvation and deliverance; we hear the compassionate tones of this saving promise, which affect

us like prayers and lamentations. Gloomy in appearance and bereft of hope, the doomed man is listening to them also; weary, and longing for death, he paces the strand; while his crew, worn out and tired of life, are silently employed in "making all taut" on board. How often has he, ill-fated, already gone through the same scene! How often has he steered his ship o'er ocean's billows to the inhabited shores, on which, at each seven years' truce, he has been permitted to land! How many times has he fancied that he has reached the limit of his torments, and, alas! how repeatedly has he, terribly undecieved, been obliged to betake himself again to his wild wanderings at sea! In order that he may secure release by death, he has made common cause in his anguish with the floods and tempests against himself; his ship he has driven into the gaping gulf of the billows, yet the gulf has not swallowed it up; through the surf of the breakers he has steered it upon the rocks, yet the rocks have not broken it in pieces. All the terrible dangers of the sea, at which he once laughed in his wild eagerness for energetic action, now mock at him. They do him no injury; under a curse he is doomed to wander o'er ocean's wastes, for ever in quest of treasures which fail to re-animate him, and without finding that which alone can redeem him! Swiftly a smart-looking ship sails by him; he hears the jovial familiar song of its crew, as, returning from a voyage, they make jolly on their nearing home. Enraged at their merry humour, he gives chase, and coming up with them in the gale, so scares and terrifies them, that they become mute in their fright, and take to flight. From the depth of his terrible misery he shrieks out for redemption; in his horrible banishment from mankind it is a woman that alone can bring him salvation. Where and in what country carries his deliverer? Where is there a feeling heart to sympathise with his woes? Where is she who will not turn away from him in horror and fright, like those cowardly fellows who in their terror hold up the cross at his approach! A lurid light now breaks through the darkness; like lightning it pierces his tortured soul. It vanishes, and again beams forth; keeping his eye upon this guiding star, the sailor steers towards it, o'er waves and floods. What is it that so powerfully attracts him, but the gaze of a woman, which, full of sublime sadness and divine sympathy, is drawn towards him! A heart has opened its lowest depths to the awful sorrows of this ill-fated one; it cannot but sacrifice itself for his sake, and breaking in sympathy for him, annihilate itself in his woes. The unhappy one is overwhelmed at this divine appearance; his ship is broken in pieces and swallowed up in the gulf of the billows; but he, saved and exalted, emerges from the waves, with his victorious deliverer at his side, and ascends to heaven, led by the rescuing hand of sublimest love.

Foreign Correspondence.

MUSIC IN NORTH GERMANY.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

LEIPZIG, March, 1873.

We are approaching the end of our concert season, and propose to-day to review in a concise manner the concert performances of the last four weeks. Many novelties, much that was good, has been offered to us, but we cannot point out anything very prominent. If this remark refers to the concerts at the Gewandhaus, we suppose our readers will not accuse us of the sin of omission if this time we

leave without mention the opera, of whose repertoire only a single performance, that of *Les deux Journées*, stands out prominently, and all the many smaller Leipzig musical societies, with their numerous but not very important concerts.

The seventeenth subscription concert at the Gewandhaus opened with Mozart's Symphony in three movements, in D major (No. 1 of Breitkopf and Härtel's Score Edition). This wonderful work was brought to hearing in an excellent, faultless manner, and has again delighted us in the highest degree. It was followed by the concert air by Mozart, "Wehe mir, ach wo bin ich," which also ranks amongst the best of its kind. A young singer, till now unknown to us, Frä. Lioba Clemens, from the Royal Theatre at Cassel, introduced herself, through the performance of this air, to the greatest advantage. Voice, school, and execution have pleased us much, and earned warm acclamations for the singer. Frä. Clemens sang afterwards three other songs, the first of which, "Die Thräne," by Rubinstein, excels through deep expression and beautiful feeling; the two other songs, compositions by Reiss and Esser, do not rise above the level of ordinary drawing-room compositions.

Very excellently were also executed the overtures to the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, by Mendelssohn, and to *König Manfred*, by Reinecke. The instrumental soli of the evening were in the hands of Herr Concertmeister Richard Barth, from Münster, who played the "Dramatic Concerto" of Spohr, Schumann's "Abendlied," and "Ungarische Tänze," by Brahms (the two last numbers in Joachim's arrangement), very well. For curiosity's sake we mention here that Herr Barth carries the bow in the left hand, and masters the strings of the violin with the fingers of the right hand. In his playing this abnormality is not at all to be heard; and only an accidental glance at the performer informed us of this extraordinary management of the violin, which, as far as we know, stands as an example quite by itself.

On the 28th of February the concert for the benefit of the Orchestra Pension Funds took place, with a very long, abundant, but also somewhat varied programme. We point before all to the opening number, "Serenade for stringed orchestra" (No. 2, in F major), by Robert Volkmann. This work of the known master, although it does not belong to his most important compositions, interests nevertheless in its four short movements through the well sounding harmony, as well as many charming inventions and telling modulations. As regards its nature, the little work is perhaps more suitable for a chamber-music performance. The rendering of the work, under the direction of Concertmeister David, was very nice and clearly shaded; only it seemed to us as if the time of the last movement had been taken a little too fast.

New were also two entr'actes to a drama unknown to us, by Lindner, *Friedrich Wilhelm der Kurprinz*, which Carl Reinecke has composed lately. Both pieces are constructed with skill and experience; the second, a very lively gavotte, met with much applause.

With the greatest, most unlimited praise, we have also to mention the performance in this concert of the Dresden Concertmeister, Lauterbach, and particularly of the rendering of the Adagio from Spohr's D minor Concerto. Over this performance there pervaded a nobility and an inner feeling such as only an artist "by the grace of God" is able to produce.

Our home artists, Frau Peschka-Leutner and Herr Gura, gave again in their usual style very excellent vocal pieces. A very important interest was further attached to the concert through the performances of Frau Sofie Menter, from Vienna. Considering the great repute this

lady enjoys, we may perhaps enter a little more closely into her performances, both at this concert and also at a later chamber-music entertainment (on the 1st of March). Frä. Menter we met first about six years ago. She was then a young girl of about eighteen or nineteen years. Her performances at that time testified already to a brilliant technic, but it was wanting in the real artistic understanding, the true inner conception of the task. We were naturally all the more anxious in our expectations, six years being on the one hand a long time for the development of a striving artist-nature, while on the other hand reports from abroad spoke of Frau Menter as an artist of the highest standing. We must now, be it openly confessed, not deny that Frau Menter has not come up to our expectations in every respect. If we look at the different performances separately, we do not hesitate to pronounce the rendering of Beethoven's E flat major concerto as having been technically absolutely faultless; but we could not help the impression (particularly in the first movement) that there were only well-trained fingers at work, which mastered all the different passages conscientiously and with beautiful certainty, without, however, any inner working of the soul having seized the grand material. But, on the other hand, Frau Menter played at the close of the evening Liszt's Fantasia on *Don Giovanni* with a most astonishing certainty and perfection, even with a charming verve.

In the above-mentioned chamber-music concert, Frau Menter played Beethoven's C minor Trio (Op. 1, No. 3), together with David and Hegar. We cannot help fancying that on this evening Frau Menter was influenced by the state of her health. Otherwise we could not explain her indifferent treatment of this trio, which often was void of natural taste. Through the carelessness of the lady player the last movement got into serious danger. An interruption of the movement was only avoided through the presence of the leaf-turner sitting by the side of Mme. Menter. In the five solo pieces which Mme. Menter played afterwards, she showed herself again as possessing an excellent technic; but neither the choice of the pieces nor the style of performance proved her an artist of high standing as regards intellect. At all events, as far as we are concerned, we cannot see either the necessity or find any beauty in this manner of forcibly pressing out the melody in Liszt's transcription of Schubert's song, "Margaret at the Spinning-wheel." The choice of Tausig's arrangement of Weber's "Invitation à la Valse," we can also not admire. The charming natural character of this composition is altogether altered, and not to advantage, through the bombastic style in which Tausig has transformed the piece for a bravoura performance of the greatest difficulty.

At this chamber-music concert we heard for the first time Haydn's String Quartett (Op. 54, No. 2) in C major, a work which, on account of its grand and excellent contents, we can highly recommend to all quartett players. David further produced his tasteful arrangement of Mozart's Sonata in D major (for two pianofortes), together with Concertmeister Roentgen. With this work of David we will mention another arrangement of the same master, which, according to our opinion, is of even greater importance, and which he brought forth at the nineteenth subscription concert. Everybody knows Bach's D minor concerto for pianoforte, but very few may be aware that this concerto was originally composed for the violin, but that the manuscript has been lost. David has now through his arrangement earned the merit of having regained the concerto for the instrument for which it was really intended, and we do not doubt but that the work in its present form will be a welcome addition to the repertoire

of every earnest violin virtuoso. The worthy master has played it again very excellently.

The evening was opened with Haydn's sublime B flat major Symphony (No. 12 in Breitkopf and Härtel's Edition), wonderfully executed; after which Herr Gura sang the air, "Bedauernswerthes Loos,"* from Handel's *Samson*, exceedingly fine, and full of expression. The same success this artist obtained with three songs by Robert Franz, which he gave in the second part of the concert. This part commenced with Robert Schumann's "Festival Overture, with chorus on the Rheinweilied." The work, evidently written as an occasional piece, we have not heard for ten years, and now again it has only given us very moderate enjoyment. We cannot attribute any higher importance to it. Herr Gura joined the Pauliner Male Chorus in the performance of Bruch's "Normanenzug" in this concert. We count this short work among the best productions of Bruch.

We now come to the principal event of the last four weeks. It was the first performance of the "Triumphlied" for an eight-part chorus and orchestra, by Brahms. Before we express our critical opinion, we declare that we consider this work as one of the most important productions of the present time, of which we can only speak with the highest esteem and even admiration. If, nevertheless, the composition failed to make upon us a really telling and overpowering impression, the fault lies neither with the text—taken from the Revelation of St. John—nor with the manner in which it was performed at the eighteenth Gewandhaus concert. We would rather look for the reason in a certain lack of unity of the style, which now and then seems to amount to want of style. The work is divided into three movements, of which the first is the most imposing and most effective. The two other movements grow weaker by degrees, and influence considerably the total impression, although they contain many great, beautiful, and deeply felt points. What appears to us to disturb the whole we will frankly and plainly express, in saying that Brahms endeavours in the first two movements to step in Handel's cothurnus. In this he succeeds, however, only externally, in a very clever and well-studied manner, it is true; but the inner necessity which caused the genius of Handel to give in his style the most elevated expression of the feeling of his time, is wanting. Amongst the endeavours to move freely on the polyphonic waves of Handel's style, at times movements appear of a totally different and more modern feeling. These too are fine in Brahms' work; but they disturb the uniformity of the whole. We are not inclined to assert that Handel's armour gets now and then too heavy for Herr Brahms. We only draw this conclusion: that the feeling of our present time forcibly breaks away with Brahms, although he starts with the intention of singing in Handel's manner. It appears to us unreal when Brahms endeavours to repeat in the second half of the nineteenth century the expression of the highest song of praise as it is to be found in Handel's music. Our feeling, or rather the manner of giving it expression, is to-day quite different to what it was in Handel's time; and our great heroes—Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn, Cherubini, our shining master of the present age, Mendelssohn, have in their church-music, with all the knowledge and admiration for the works of Handel and Bach, never copied either form or style of these two masters. It is on the contrary characteristic of every one of them that they have taken in the good and splendid compositions of preceding masters, and, according to their time and their own individuality, have created other works which, it is true, we cannot fancy without these

preceding works; but nowhere do we find a trace of their intention of working in the style of the older masters. Mendelssohn, although not the greatest of the above-named men, offers, because he is the latest, the best proof of our assertion. We doubt if before him anybody ever had such a thorough knowledge of the works of Bach and Handel as he possessed. But after everything he obtained from these sources became his flesh and blood, he created the two most important oratorios of the nineteenth century. They are, however, true children of Mendelssohn's intellect, and owe their unexampled quick and lasting popularity to the fact that they speak to us according to the expression of feeling of our time.

Esteem and admire we can and must Brahms' "Triumphlied," on account of the earnestness and the greatness of what he endeavours. Specially as musicians the abundance of knowledge we meet interests us; but the work cannot warm or charm us, cannot carry us away.

This eighteenth concert brought also the Fourth Symphony, by Mendelssohn, and the D minor (also, the fourth) Symphony, by Schumann, the last executed with high finish, whilst the first named was not quite free from unevenness at its present performance. Besides, Gade's *Frühlings-Fantasia* for soli pianoforte and orchestra came to hearing in very good style. The work has paused for a long time, and we cannot conceal that notwithstanding the charm and loveliness it possesses, the impression it made upon us this time was by far less deep than that we received from it about twenty years ago.

To-morrow (on the 14th of March) Riedel's Society brings amongst other works also the German Requiem by Brahms, about which if we remember rightly we reported already when it was first performed at the Gewandhaus. Since both the works ("Triumphlied" and "Requiem") have appeared with English words, we wish and hope that our readers may have an opportunity to become better acquainted with these two important compositions by a performance in London than it is possible to get through our critique. The contents of a musical composition cannot be expressed in words, the language scarcely offers the means approximately to express the impression which a piece makes on the listener.

MUSIC IN VIENNA.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

VIENNA, March 12th, 1873.

THE second extra concert of the Musicverein was a glorious one. The performance of Handel's *Saul*, a work so full of dramatic life—and never heard in Vienna!—caused a sensation. By producing that gigantic oratorio, studied with infinite care, the conductor of these concerts, Johannes Brahms, showed again his great respect for the art in general, and for the great spirits in the domain of music. Bach and Handel—particularly with their great vocal compositions, till now only seldom and at long intervals heard in our capital—have to look forward to a series of brilliant days. *Saul* was performed according to the score of the German Handel Society, the libretto translated by G. G. Gervinus. The omissions, inevitable from the length of the work, were chosen in the right way; the soli showed a number of our best present oratorio singers in town, the orchestra was that of the Opera, and the chorus that of the Singverein. Never was the audience more electrified by a Handel performance in Vienna; the plaudits began with the first number, and were as great at the last piece. The arias in their short structure were appreciated throughout; also the orchestra in the sinfonias, and the wonderful Dead March. But

* "Thy glorious deeds."

what shall I say of the sublimity of the choruses, the glory of the work! The majesty and imposing vigour was gigantic; the mighty "Hallelujah;" the introductory chorus of the second part, "Envy! eldest born of hell," with its ever-rolling scale in the basses; the following, "O fatal consequence of rage;" the chorus, "Mourn, Israel, mourn, thy beauty lost," the expression of the deepest grief; the two last choruses, "O fatal day," and "Gird on thy sword,"—each number created the greatest sensation. We need only add the names of those who contributed to the exquisite performance. The soli were sung by Frau Dustmann (Michai), Gomperz-Bettelheim (David), Herren Walter (Jonathan), Pirk (Abner and, curiously enough, the part of the witch), Maas (Samuel and Amalekite), and Scaria (Saul). At the head of the violins stood Hellmesberger; the organ was in the experienced hands of H. Bibl of the Hofcapelle; some parts of the recitatives were accompanied on the piano by Schenner, professor of the Conservatoire.

The seventh Philharmonic concert brought forward the symphony in B flat, No. 4, by Gade, and one by Haydn in G major, played last year at the Crystal Palace; Schubert's Funeral March, scored by Liszt, and an interesting capriccio by the talented H. Gärdener, son of the worthy professor in Hamburg. The Männergesang-verein, which, I hope, will be admired in some productions during the Exhibition—gave a second concert with Schubert (23rd psalm), Schumann ("Der Eidgenossen Nachtwache," and "Die Rose stand im Thau"), Weinwurm (Toscanische Lieder), and some other well-known songs for male voices.

Hellmesberger, concertmeister and director of the Conservatoire, gave his two-hundredth quartett soirée, which was celebrated in every way by his friends and admirers. It is enough to say that he has performed forty-six compositions by Beethoven, and particularly the last difficult quartetts which became familiar to the town first by the same "Jubelgreis," fortunately still a man of some forty years. Hellmesberger began in the year 1849, when he gave his first soirée on the 4th November, his coadjutors being the members of the Hofcapelle, Herren Durst, Heissler, and Schlesinger. This time, on the 27th February, 1873, they were Jos. Hellmesberger, his son, Bachrich, and Rover. The concert by the Liedersängerin Helene Magnus, and the pianist Epstein, I mentioned in my last report, was so well received that it was not a risk to give a repetition. A MS. piano quartetto by the blind Lackner, pleased by its freshness; Haydn's variations in F minor were performed here for the first time, and heard with great interest—the delicate, fine-feeling style of playing by the much-esteemed pianist was just the right one for that composition; some songs by Robert Franz, who is now much spoken of, pleased; Schumann's "Dichterliebe," every true Liedersänger knows. There were again three piano concerts: Mme. Gabriele Joël began with Bach's concerto, D major, and finished with Liszt; Emil Smietanski began with Beethoven, Sonata Op. 106, and finished likewise with Liszt; Hermann Riedel, who visited London last year as accompanist of the tenor Walter, also began with Beethoven, Sonata Op. 110, and finished with a composition of his own. Likewise Mdlle. Ehnn and Herr Walter from the Opera sang some songs of the concert-giver, all of which were, as it is said, eminently well received. On the same evening, Dr. Ambros, the author of the scientific "Geschichte der Musik," of which three volumes have been published till now, gave his first reading upon the development of dramatic music, particularly in Venice. The success of that lecture was so great that it is easy to predict a splendid future for that kind of instructive prelections. For the coming

time quite every evening has its tormentor, and the torture probably increases the nearer the monstrous Exhibition approaches.

Before I enter into the news of the opera, let me inform you of the death of some deserving men in music. There is the organ and harmonium manufacturer, Peter Titz, who died the 6th February, aged fifty years.

Dr. Leopold Edler von Sonnleithner, advocate, and an excellent musical amateur, a member of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde since its foundation in the year 1813, died on the 3rd of March, in the seventy-sixth year of his age. He was a patron to Schubert, whose compositions he first brought forward publicly by procuring the means for their being printed. Being a living dictionary, by collecting the day's news in music, he was ever ready to give information wherever he thought it worth. Also Otto Jahn mentions his name in the Mozart biography with great praise. Mr. Ella knew him well, and I am sure will be sorry to hear of the loss. Another intelligent man, Pyllmann, professor in music, died 7th of March, but thirty-one years old, and much regretted by all who knew him personally. He has written the weekly Vienna reports in the *Leipziger Allgem. Musikal. Zeitung*, under the cipher "F. P."

Iphigenia auf Tauris, the great dramatic work by Gluck, four or five times announced, and as many times countermanded, was at last brought forward on the 2nd of March, its first representation in the new house. In Vienna the opera was first produced on the 23rd of October, 1781, Mdme. Bernasconi performing *Iphigenia* (in December the same year *Alceste* with the same singer followed). The production was a careful one; all the performers did their best, the *mise en scène* was appropriate, and the audience seemed to appreciate the depth of the work, which has outlasted quite a century. Frau Dustmann (*Iphigenia*), Labatt and Walter (*Orest* and *Pylades*), received much applause, and orchestra and chorus, under the conductorship of Herr Otto Dessoff, were likewise praiseworthy.

The basso, Herr E. Scaria, gave, as Hans Stadinger in the *Waffenschmied*, by Lortzing, another proof of his versatility. Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream* is now in rehearsal as a festival representation on the occasion of the nuptials of the Archduchess Gisela, the actors being members of the Burgtheater. Sudden indispositions have caused many changes in the programme, not always contemplated by the direction. The opera *Hamlet* is still in suspense for want of an Ophelia; if you know one, send the good daughter instantly, she will be well received. The programme of the operas, given since the 12th of February till to-day is as follows:—*Faust*, *Lohengrin*, *Postillion*, *Stumme von Portici*, *Lustige Weiber von Windsor*, *Romeo* (twice), *Don Sebastian* (twice), *Tannhäuser*, *Freischütz*, *Fidelio*, *Troubadour*, *Norma*, *Iphigenia auf Tauris*, *Afrikanerin*, *Lucrezia Borgia*, *Schwarze Domino*, *Rienzi*, *Waffenschmied von Worms*.

Correspondence.

To the Editor of the MONTHLY MUSICAL RECORD.

A SOUVENIR FROM THE WAGNER CONCERT.

SIR,—I was sitting by the side of a young lady, very enthusiastic about Wagner, and who spoke to her father—next to her—in very high terms of the musical knowledge required to understand and appreciate Wagner's music. The worthy father showed at first signs of high intelligence, for after every piece his applause was very great indeed.

Everything went smoothly enough till the "Bridal Procession"

from *Lohengrin* was encored and repeated. My young neighbour, perfectly unconscious of the piece being played over again, followed the programme, and read the introduction to the third act, "ce mouvement vif, respirant un air de fête et de noble réjouissance," as Liszt says.

And when the orchestra proceeded to perform this piece, she listened to it, whilst following the overture to the *Meistersinger* in the descriptive programme, and actually had the cheek (if I may say so) to point out several times to her father the different passages of the overture, printed in type in the programme, as referring to the piece just being played.

The father—a genuine musical hippopotamus it appears—looked delighted, and seemed highly proud of the musical knowledge displayed by his daughter, and her keen appreciation of Wagner's music.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

J. C.

Reviews.

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg. Von RICHARD WAGNER. Full Score, and Pianoforte Score. London: Schott & Co.

WE doubt whether in the course of our experience in reviewing we have ever had a task of such difficulty—perhaps, we may also add, of such importance—as the just appreciation of an opera of Wagner's. The difficulties in the way of the critic are manifold. In the first place, it is probable that no music was ever written which loses so much by separation from the stage as that of this composer. And as we have never been fortunate enough to hear one of his works performed in Germany—the only country, we may add, in which we think full justice can be rendered to it—we are forced, in forming our opinion of this work, and of other of our author's operas which have been sent us for review, and which we propose to notice in succeeding numbers of this paper, to draw largely upon our imagination. In order to realise, even imperfectly, the effect of much of this opera, it is absolutely necessary not merely to read the music most carefully, but also to be perfectly familiar with the libretto, and to follow with the mind's eye all the stage-directions, just as with the mind's ear we conceive the meaning of the notes. This in itself is a considerable mental effort.

But our difficulties are still further augmented by the fact that the reading of the pianoforte score, ably done though it is, conveys but a most imperfect idea of the work; and that the full orchestral score is one of the very hardest to decipher which, in a somewhat extensive experience of score reading, we have ever met with. This arises not so much from its fulness as from its polyphony. And yet so much of the special effect of the work depends on its masterly orchestral combinations, that it is only by the diligent study of the full score that the opera can be fairly judged.

We should not be doing our duty towards our readers did we shirk the work before us, and we therefore confess that during the past month we have spent no inconsiderable portion of our time in reading, marking, learning, and inwardly digesting *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*; and we shall now record some of the results of our investigations.

We are so accustomed to look upon Wagner as a composer of the "romantic school"—his principal works (*Fliegende Holländer*, *Tannhäuser*, *Lohengrin*, *Tristan und Isolde*) all dealing more or less with the legendary or supernatural—that the idea of his writing a homely comic opera strikes one at first sight with a feeling of incongruity. It is the very last thing that we should suspect him of doing. And yet *Die Meistersinger* is to all intents and purposes a comic opera, and we will add, one of the very best comic operas of modern times. We will first give an outline, as brief as may be, of the libretto, and then say something about the way in which it is set to music.

Most of our readers will be aware that Wagner invariably writes his own libretti. He is above and before all a poet; and such books as those of the *Tannhäuser*, the *Tristan*, and, best of all, the *Nibelungen* tetralogy, are indeed rare in operatic literature. The advantage, moreover, of the words and music proceeding from the same pen is obvious, especially where, instead of the words being subordinate to the music, the reverse is so frequently the case. In the *Meistersinger* Wagner has given us a carefully developed plot of such interest that the poem, quite apart from the music, is worth reading for its own sake.

The period of the action is the middle of the sixteenth century, and on the rising of the curtain for the first act we see the interior of St. Katharine's Church at Nuremberg; in front is the choir of the church, and at the back of the stage can be seen the last rows of seats. The

time is the afternoon of the eve of St. John's feast, and we hear sung by the assembled congregation the last verse of a hymn to the Baptist, with which the service concludes. During the singing of the hymn a quiet flirtation is going on between Eva Pogner, the daughter of Veit Pogner, a rich goldsmith, and one of the guild of "Mastersingers," who with her attendant, Magdalena, is in the last row of seats, and Walther von Stolzing, a young knight from Franconia. It is a case of love at first sight; and the young lady is by no means indisposed to the advances of her admirer. After the congregation has dispersed, Walther enters into conversation with her, and asks her if she is married. Her maid explains that she is to be on the morrow, though she does not yet know who will be her husband. It appears that there is to be a singing contest, and that Pogner intends to give his daughter as a wife to the successful competitor. Walther expresses his intention to enter the lists. While they are talking, the apprentices of the Mastersingers come to place seats for them, as they are about to hold what we may call a committee—a "Freiung," for conferring the freedom of the guild on deserving candidates—in the church. Among the apprentices is David, Magdalena's lover, who is article to Hans Sachs, the shoemaker and poet; and to him Magdalena refers Walther, to be "coached up" (to use the technical phrase) for his examination by the Mastersingers. After the two women have left the church, David begins his instructions, and gives a ludicrous description of the various technicalities required to produce a correct "Mastersong." The Mastersingers next enter, and it should be explained here that the title is given to a guild, consisting chiefly of tradesmen and artisans, who have made a study of music. The first to enter are Pogner, Eva's father, and Beckmesser, a widower, who is a suitor for Eva's hand. Walther recognises Pogner as an old acquaintance, and expresses his desire to become a member of the guild. The Mastersingers being all assembled, Pogner expresses to them his intention of giving his daughter as the prize to the victor on the morrow, an announcement which is received with much applause. He brings forward Walther as a candidate for mastership, and the latter is requested to furnish a proof of his skill in a song of which both words and music are his own. According to the rules of the guild he is allowed seven mistakes. If he makes more, he is declared to have "versungen und verthan" ("mis-sung and failed"). Beckmesser, as the oldest of the Masters, has the office of "marker," to keep account of the faults, and he is naturally but ill disposed towards a young and handsome rival. Walther, moreover, being a self-taught poet, is quite unacquainted with the details required by the rules; and the result may be foreseen. Beckmesser declares that he never heard such a disgraceful exhibition—that there were positively more faults than he could keep account of; and in spite of the vigorous protest of Hans Sachs, who maintains that, though not according to their rules, Walther's song was truly poetical, he is declared to have failed.

The second act passes in a street, in which we see two houses adjoining one another—Pogner's and Sachs'. Night is drawing on, and the apprentices are putting up the shutters, singing and "chaffing" one another and David. Pogner and Eva enter, as returning from a walk, and in the conversation that ensues the former discovers the state of his daughter's affections. Eva learns of her lover's failure; he meets her in the street, and proposes an immediate elopement, to which she consents, vowing to have no one but him. Sachs, however, from his shop-door has overheard much of their conversation; and, having other plans for compassing their happiness, resolves to thwart their scheme, and therefore turns his lantern full on where they are standing. They retreat into the shadow, and as they are about to retire down another street, Beckmesser comes down with a lute to serenade his lady-love. Their retreat is now cut off. But Sachs is by no means favourable to Beckmesser's pretensions, as he is far too old to be a suitable match for Eva. As soon therefore as Beckmesser begins to tune his lute, Sachs strikes up a song at the top of his voice, accompanying himself on his lute. In vain does Beckmesser beg him to stop; he declares that he must work, as he has to get some shoes done by the morning. As a last resource the unfortunate serenader asks him to listen and criticise the song, to which Sachs consents; and then follows a most comical scene. Parodying Beckmesser as the "marker" in the first act, Sachs listens, marking all mistakes by a blow with the hammer on the last. These blows come fast and furious, and Beckmesser in his rage sings louder and louder, till at last the neighbours, roused by the noise, come out to put a stop to it; and a general *mélée* ensues, in the course of which the unlucky Beckmesser is severely handled. In the midst of the confusion, Sachs comes out of his house, seizes Walther by the arm, and takes him in with him, and sends Eva to her own house. The crowd disperses on the appearance of a watchman, and the curtain falls.

The third act shows the interior of Sachs' shop. We must pass hastily over many details; and will therefore simply say that it

is now the eventful morning. Sachs instructs Walther how to arrange a song which he composes as a "Mastersong," and while Walther is singing, the shoemaker takes notes of the poem. They then leave the room, to dress for the festival; when Beckmesser comes by, looks in at the door, and seeing the room empty, enters. His eye catches the paper which Sachs had left on the table, and seeing that it is a poem, concludes that Sachs is the author, and is a rival with him for Eva's hand. Hearing steps approaching, he hastily pockets the paper, and on Sachs' entering accuses him of rivalry and treachery. When Sachs denies the charges, he pulls out the paper to support them. Sachs says that as he has got the paper he shall receive it as a present from himself, lest it should be said that he stole it. Beckmesser, knowing Sachs' fame as a poet, is overjoyed, thinking himself now sure of success, and tells Sachs that the events of the night before had driven his own poem quite out of his head, and asks if he may use the new one. "Certainly," says Sachs; "but be careful how you study it, for it is not easy." "And you will promise never to say that it is yours?" "Willingly." Exit Beckmesser—for the time being a happy man.

The scene changes to a meadow in which the contest is to take place. Various guilds with their banners arrive; last of all the Mastersingers. Among these is Beckmesser, in the last depth of despair. De what he will he cannot learn the new song; he is perfectly certain no one will understand it, but he relies on Sachs' popularity. The contest begins, and as the senior candidate, he comes forward first. But whether Sachs' writing was indistinct, or his own brain was muddled—probably both—he makes such outrageous nonsense of the words that at last every one bursts into a roar of laughter. Beckmesser turns furiously to Sachs, and declares that the song is his. This Sachs of course denies, saying that Beckmesser best knows how he came by it, and that the song was a very good one if properly sung. He asks if any one in the assembly knows the song, and can sing it correctly. Walther comes forward, sings it, and by popular acclamation is awarded the crown, and with it Eva's hand.

Such is an outline of this interesting libretto. Our notice of the music must necessarily be somewhat brief; for there are so many points of almost equal importance that if we once entered on a detailed analysis we should far exceed the limits of our space. True to his theories, Wagner gives us here no separate songs or detached movements; but one piece leads into another from the beginning to the end of an act. How far the music gains by this is, we think, an open question. Wagner objects to the detached aria as unnatural. But it must be remembered that the opera itself is also, from a matter-of-fact point of view, unnatural—or perhaps, to speak more accurately, artificial. Into this discussion, however, we must not enter here.

Although, however, there are no detached songs in this work, there is an abundance of charming melodies. Foremost in beauty we are inclined to place Walther's solo in the first act, "Am stillen Herd," a most exquisite melody, which, by a little judicious arrangement, might be detached from its context and used as a concert-piece. Excellent also are Pogner's solo, "Das schöne Fest," parts of the duet in the second act between Eva and Walther, Walther's prize-song in the third act, "Morgenlich leuchtend im rosigen Schein," and the quintet in the same act, "Selig wie die Sonne." Not less interesting, in a lighter style, are the choruses of apprentices in the first and second acts; while, as examples of thoroughly good comic music, we may instance Hans Sachs' solo, "Als Eva aus dem Paradies," the reading of the "Leges Tabulaturae" (the Mastersingers' Regulations) in the first act, and Beckmesser's serenade, with Sachs' hammer accompaniment, in the second act. On the other hand, we must confess that there are parts of the work which appear to us dry and laboured, when studied apart from the stage. How far this impression would be removed at the representation we are unable to say. It must not be forgotten, however, that the *Meistersinger* is pre-eminently a work which must be judged of as a whole, and not from separate portions. We are inclined to consider it one of its composer's most original and characteristic works.

We must, in conclusion, say a word or two about the orchestration. There is a very prevalent impression that Wagner is one of the noisiest of modern composers. Our readers will therefore probably be surprised to learn that one great feature in the score of this work is the moderation and discretion of its accompaniments. The instrumentation is always rich, often sonorous, very seldom noisy. For example, in the first hundred pages of the first act the full orchestra is only used twice—each time for a few bars; and similar reticence is the characteristic of the whole work. The ingenuity and novelty of the treatment of the wind instruments are above all praise; and the score is one of the finest studies of instrumentation to be met with in musical literature.

HANDEL'S *L'Allegro, Il Pensieroso ed Il Moderato*, with additional Accompaniments by ROBERT FRANZ. Full score.
BACH'S *Magnificat*, with additional Accompaniments by ROBERT FRANZ. Full score. Leipzig: F. E. C. Leuckart.

ALL students of the works of Bach and Handel are aware that the original scores are in a very imperfect condition. It was the custom of that day to write merely a figured bass for the organ or harpsichord, the performer on those instruments being assumed to be a sufficiently good musician to fill up the harmony from the figures in accordance with the original plan of the work. At the first performance of the music, the parts in question were usually played by the composer himself; and of course in such a case the designed effect would be fully realised. But in the process of time the tradition of the proper method of filling up the accompaniments was lost, and it became necessary to provide some substitute. We have, indeed, heard the music given in its incomplete state—as not long since at one of the Crystal Palace concerts, when the song "Sweet Bird," from *L'Allegro*, one of the very works now before us, was sung without any filling up of the harmonies, the duets between flute and basses, or between voice and basses, sounding meagre in the extreme; but in general additional accompaniments, more or less good, have been introduced. Among those who have thus touched up (or patched up, as the case may be), we may mention the late Mr. George Perry, Mr. Vincent Novello, Sir Michael Costa, Mr. Arthur Sullivan, and (last, not least) Mendelssohn, in his organ part to the edition of *Israel in Egypt*, published by the London Handel Society. Among the most successful of the attempts to complete these old scores are those of Robert Franz. In an interesting pamphlet, published some little time since, and noticed in our number for last December, Franz gives an account of the reasons which induced him to undertake the task, and the methods which he thought it advisable to adopt. Some of the results of his labours now lie before us; and after a careful examination, we are bound to say that they appear to us admirably done.

The chief point that strikes us in connection with these scores is the admirable fidelity with which the spirit of the original is preserved. In some movements—for example, in the air "Sweet Bird" above referred to—the additions consist almost entirely of a few chords for the wind instruments, to fill up the harmony; in other cases, as for instance in several movements of Bach's "Magnificat," much polyphonic imitation is introduced; but in both cases the scrupulous reverence with which the style of the author is adhered to can hardly be too highly commended. It would be very interesting, did space permit, to compare Franz's scores with the originals, movement by movement, and to point out what he has done in each case. For this, however, we must refer the student to the works themselves, and will only, in conclusion, cordially recommend both works in this form to the directors of our choral societies. Bach's "Magnificat" in particular would be worth the attention of Mr. Barnby.

Songs for one voice, with Piano Accompaniment, by J. H. FRANZ.
Ops. 11, 12, 13, 17, 18.
Ave Maria, Agnus Dei, two Quintetts in Canon, with Accompaniment of Organ, or Pianoforte, by ditto. Op. 14.
Three Four-Part Songs. By ditto.
Polonaise Brillante pour Pianoforte. By ditto. Op. 20.
Nachtgesang, for two voices with orchestra. By ditto.
Concert-aria, "Barbara! perche' fuggi?" for soprano, solo, and orchestra. By ditto. Offenbach: J. André.
Three Two-Part Songs, with Piano Accompaniments. By ditto. Op. 19. Berlin: A. Fürstner.

Of the composer of these pieces we are unable to give our readers any information. We believe he is a young man, though, from the fluency displayed in his writings, evidently not an inexperienced one. Of all the works before us, the songs with piano please us the best. Herr J. H. Franz (whom, it is almost superfluous to say, our readers must not confound with Robert Franz) has a copious flow of natural and pleasing melody. His songs are always clear in form, and intelligible; many of them, moreover, are very interesting. We fail, however, to discover traces of absolute *genius* in any of them, and are inclined to rank the composer among the large class of writers who possess great talent, but in whose music the "divine spark," as Beethoven termed it, is wanting. In saying this we intend no disparagement to Herr Franz; his music is far superior to a very large proportion of what is produced nowadays; but we see no indications of his possessing the special gifts which place a musician among the great tone-poets. The two quintetts in canon are very clever, and give evidence of the writer's mastery of technical form. The concert-aria, with orchestral accompaniment, is, in our opinion, not so successful as some of the less ambitious pieces. It is Mozartish in form and treatment, but not particularly striking. The

orchestration is effective and well-considered, without being distinguished by any special originality. On the whole we may say that these works do much credit to Herr Franz's musicianship, and that, though not a great genius, he may claim a very respectable position as a composer.

Favourite Movements from the Pianoforte Sonatas of MOZART.
Edited by E. PAUER. Eight numbers.

Favourite Movements from the Pianoforte Sonatas of BEETHOVEN.
Edited by E. PAUER. Twenty-nine numbers. Augener & Co.

MOST teachers who desire to give their pupils good music, especially the works of the great classical composers for the piano, have no doubt been met by the difficulty that in many cases entire sonatas are too long for their purpose. A work of twenty pages, or even more, is sometimes apt to dishearten the student,—to say nothing of the fact that while certain simple movements may be suitable to her capacity, others may be altogether beyond her reach. We have ourselves, in talking on this subject to a well-known professor received the reply, "It's no use; girls will not learn those long sonatas." The idea therefore of publishing separate movements for teaching purposes is a very good one; and the selection has been made (we presume by Herr Pauer), with much skill. Thus, among other movements of Mozart, we have the "Rondeau en Polonoise" (not "and Polonoise," as, by a printer's error, it is given on the title), from the sonata in D, the charming variations, and the "Rondo alla Turca" from that in A; and the slow movements from the two greater sonatas in F. Of Beethoven, again, we have most of the slow movements, and many of the *schersi* in his earlier sonatas—the later ones being, from their greater difficulty, of less use for teaching purposes—besides such pieces as the Prestissimo from the sonata in F minor, Op. 2, No. 1, and the celebrated variations from the sonata in A flat, Op. 26. The entire series has the advantage of the editor's fingering to the more difficult passages.

Festive Seasons, Six Sketches for the Pianoforte; *A Capricious Moment*, Capriccio for the Pianoforte; *A Postman's Knock*, Scherzino for the Pianoforte; *Liebeszauber*, Clavierstück; *La Follette*, Morceau caractéristique pour Violon, avec Accompagnement de Piano; *Chansonette pour ditto*. By HEINRICH STIEHL. London: W. Czerny.

THERE is a very curious inequality of merit between these various pieces from the same pen. To speak first of those which fail to impress us as particularly good—we confess to not caring for the two pieces for the violin. They are well written enough; but not very striking in their subjects. The same remark will also apply to the "Liebeszauber." On the other hand, the three pieces which stand first on our list are as good of their kind as they can be. The six little sketches entitled "Festive Pieces" are without exception, excellent. There is a freshness of idea about them which in these days of commonplace is quite pleasing to meet with. Being both easy and melodious, teachers will find them useful for young pupils who are just getting beyond the rudiments of music. "A Capricious Moment," is also a very interesting little piece; and we must signal out the "Postman's Knock" for special praise, because the well-known rhythm of the "rat-tat" offers a temptation to musical vulgarity which Herr Stiehl has most skillfully avoided. The subject is well treated, and the piece is likely to be very popular.

Piano Studies, by LOUIS KÖHLER, edited by E. PAUER, Books 1 to 4 (Augener & Co.), are a selection of some of the most useful from among the almost endless number of studies which Herr Köhler has published. Of the four books now before us, the first is a series of tolerably simple exercises, intermediate in difficulty between Czerny's "Hundred and One" and his "Étude de Vitesse." The second is a collection of scale exercises in all the major and minor keys; while the object of the third and fourth books, entitled "New School of Velocity," will be seen from their name. Herr Köhler's skill in his particular department is so well known as to render recommendation of these studies superfluous.

Mélodie pour Piano, par F. OROSZ (Cramer & Co.), is neither easy to play nor to listen to.

Deux Valses Brillantes, by STEPHEN HELLER, Op. 42 and 43, (Augener & Co.), are distinguished by the graceful play of fancy, which marks most of this elegant composer's writings. In spirit they remind us of the valse of Chopin; but the ideas are wholly original. Both are somewhat difficult to play well; but tolerably advanced players are sure to be charmed with them.

The Gazelle Galop, by ALEXANDER LAING (Aberdeen: Selby,

Wood & Co.), is a fair enough piece, of no great originality, but of average merit.

Theme with Variations for the Organ, by FRANCIS EDWARD GLADSTONE (Novello, Ewer & Co.), is a well-written piece on a pleasing subject. Organists will find it worthy of their attention.

Benedicite omnia Opera, set to music for voices in unison, with varied Accompaniments for the Organ, by F. E. GLADSTONE (Novello, Ewer & Co.), is a simple and useful setting of the canticle, well adapted for those choirs where the singing is unisonous.

A Communion Service, by the Rev. F. W. DAVIS (Novello, Ewer & Co.), is easy and simple, and therefore adapted to the capacity of choirs of even the smallest pretensions.

The same remarks will apply to the same writer's settings of the Responses and the Offertory Anthem "Whatsoever ye would" (Edinburgh: Murray & Gibbs).

Benedictus, pointed and arranged to a new and simple Chant, with varied Harmonies, by the same (Novello, Ewer & Co.), is very well done, and deserves to be popular.

The Songs of Wales, edited by JOHN THOMAS, Part 1 (Cramer & Co.), is the commencement of what promises to be a most interesting publication. The Welsh melodies, with a few exceptions, are not so well known as they deserve to be, and the present collection has some features of special value. In many cases more than one version of the same air is given, the harmonists in the present number being Haydn, Kozeluch, C. H. Purday, John Parry, and the editor. Twelve songs are given for the ridiculously low price of one shilling, and the quality is as good as the quantity.

Berceuse (Rest, happy Babe), Four-Part Song, by the Rev. WALTER MILLER (Weekes & Co.), shows good feeling for music, but we think modulates too frequently and abruptly for such an unpretending piece.

The Violet, Song, by the Rev. WALTER MILLER (Weekes & Co.), is a simple setting of an English version of Goethe's poem "Ein Veilchen auf der Wiese stand." Mr. Miller is perhaps not aware that the same words have been set by Mozart.

Thou'rt all the world to me, Canzonet, by RAYMOND STEINFORTH (Liverpool, Dreaper & Sons), is a very fair specimen of the sentimental ballad.

The Queen of the Year, Song, by CHARLES HENRY SHEPHERD (Augener & Co.), is a very pretty little song, which we can recommend.

The Willow Song, by F. ALBION ALDERSON (Ashdown & Parry), is somewhat commonplace in melody. The same cannot be said of the harmony, which is occasionally startling.

MUSIC RECEIVED FOR REVIEW.

Abt. "Only to meet." (Cramer.)—*Arditi*. "Forosetta." (Cramer.)—*Barri*. "Mizpah!" (Cramer.)—*Budik*. Bruder Lustig Galop. (Hammond.)—*Darnton*. "Lift up your heads." (Hall.)—*Deransart*. "The Lilac." (M'Dowell.)—*Dessaux*. "Bucéphale." (M'Dowell.)—*Edgar*. Dr. Watts's "140th Hymn." (Pitman.)—*Fischer*. "La jolie Hongroise." (M'Dowell.)—*Franz*. "Liebesklage. So halt ich endlich." (André.)—*Frost*. "Like as Christ." (Novello.)—*Gaul*. Crusaders' March, Tarantella. (Augener.)—*Gilbert*. School Harmony. (Novello.)—*Gung'l*. Leipziger Lerchen, Daheim, Copenhagen Waltzes. (Hammond.)—*Hornez*. "Sir Roland." (Chappell.)—*Köler-Béla*. Friedens Palmen Waltzes. (Hammond.)—*Leduc*. Carlsbad. (Leduc.)—*Lux*. Op. 29, 32, 33; Op. 52, Marche célèbre, for organ. (Schott.)—*Maas*. Hunting strain. (Cramer.)—*Mey*. "A leaf from the spray." (Cramer.)—*Michaelis*. Berlin galop. (Hammond.)—*Neustadt*. Souv. de Marie Thérèse. (Hammond.)—*Offenbach*. "The Dove and the Maiden." (Cramer.)—*Raimo*. "The Sailor's Bridge." (Cramer.)—*Rupf*. Se tu m'amassi, "Think then of me." (M'Dowell.)—*Strauss*. La gruche café Quadrille. (Leduc.)—*Sullivan*. "Oh! bella mia." (Cramer.)—*Wheeler*. Magnificat and nunc dimittis. (Cramer.)

Concerts, &c.

CRYSTAL PALACE.

WE have arrived at that season of the year when, especially in the case of serial concerts, it becomes utterly impossible to keep anything like a complete record of current musical events; our remarks must therefore be restricted to their most salient points, and to these only so far as concerns the production of new or unfamiliar works, and the more remarkable performances of individual executants. Schumann's Concert-stück, for pianoforte and orchestra (Op 92), satisfies both these conditions, for not only was it heard here

for the first time, but its performance by Mme. Schumann—and it may be added by the band as well—was in every way a remarkable one. This pleasing work, composed in 1849, consists of an introductory adagio and an allegro, which, however, owing to the prominence in the introduction of a theme subsequently elaborated in the allegro, as well as to a somewhat unusual succession of keys, are more correctly to be regarded as constituting an organic whole, than as two distinct movements. Though it commences and closes in G major, the prevailing key is E minor. At such irregularity, and the unexpected order of modulation thereby induced, purists no doubt will carp; the fact, however, of Schumann's astuteness in avoiding as much as possible in the body of the work so colourless a key as that of G, should perhaps not be overlooked. We can only recall one former occasion of hearing this work—at a concert of the Philharmonic Society, in 1863. That a work by Schumann, so affecting melodiously, so brightly scored for orchestra, and so effectively written for the pianoforte, should not long ago have found its way to the Crystal Palace is somewhat surprising. Herr Joachim's violin concerto (D minor), "in the Hungarian style," Op. 11, is as remarkable as a composition as its composer's performance of it is astonishing and pleasing. Though written in 1858, and soon afterwards remodelled, it had only been heard in England on three previous occasions—viz., at a concert of the Musical Society of London in 1863, at the Philharmonic in 1870, and again last year at the Crystal Palace. This truly national work, as Mr. Macfarren has aptly designated it, owes its title to the frequent employment of the minor scale, consisting of the following succession: D, E, F, G sharp; A, B flat, C sharp, D, peculiar to Hungary, its rhythmus *alla zoppa*, and its rondo finale *alla zingara*. Whether it be from its unusual tonality or its general earnestness and profundity, like the overture to *Der Meistersinger*, it requires to be heard several times before it can be thoroughly appreciated. Having heard it now some dozen times, we have no hesitation in stating our conviction that it is to be ranked among the grandest conceptions of modern times. As its difficulties are such as can only be mastered by Joachim, it is not a work likely to be very often heard. That it was played on this occasion as he alone can play it will readily be believed. Among the remarkable performances of individual executants during the past month, Mr. Franklin Taylor's admirable rendering of Beethoven's concerto in G major, No. 4, fairly claims recognition. Of the strangers who have visited us for the first time, it is due to note the favourable impression made by a young lady violinist, Mlle. Friese, a very promising pupil of Herr Ferdinand David, of Leipzig, the very remarkable success as a vocalist gained by a Russian lady, Mme. Lavrowska, during her sojourn among us, which was as welcome as it was brief and unexpected, as well as that of the German prima donna, Mme. Otto Alvsleben, who still remains here. Of the actual novelties which claim attention it must suffice to mention Herr Julius Rietz's "Lustspiel" overture in B flat, a bright and effective composition, and Dr. Ferdinand Hiller's dramatic fantasia, composed for the opening of a new theatre at Cologne last autumn. This latest of Dr. Hiller's works (Op. 157) consists of five short movements, of which the first four are intended to illustrate Tragedy, Comedy, the Modern Drama, and the Ballet respectively, while the fifth is an overture built upon the principal subjects of the foregoing movements. So ingenious and individual a work is not to be summarily dismissed after a single hearing. That Mr. Manns will accord a repetition of it on the first opportunity is strongly to be advocated.

MR. HENRY LESLIE'S CHOIR.

THIS still unrivalled choir, which now numbers some 200 members, mustered in full force at the opening concert of the eighteenth season, which took place at St. James's Hall, Feb. 27th—too late for notice in our last month's issue. The programme of music presented was methodically drawn up; the first part being devoted to Italian, the second to English composers. It consisted of no less than twenty-nine detached pieces. Under the first head were included admirable specimens of the madrigalian school, by Luca Marenzio, G. Converso, Giovanni Croce, Giovanni Ferretti, C. Festa, an aria and canzonetta by Salvatore Rosa (Mr. W. G. Cummings), an arietta by Giordani (Mme. Patey), an aria by Pergolesi (Mlle. Nita Gaëtano), a duo by F. Bianchini (Mme. Patey and Mr. Cummings), violin solos by Corelli and Tartini (Mr. Henry Holmes, accompanied on the pianoforte by Mr. W. H. Holmes), and a serenade part-song by C. Pinsuti. In the second part English composers were represented by Samuel Wesley's motett for a double choir, "In exitu Israel," Mr. Leslie's popular trio, "O memory," part-songs by Mr. Walter Macfarren and Sir W. Sterndale Bennett, songs by Messrs. Cummings, Hullah, and Sullivan, madrigals by John Ward, Wilbye, and Pearsall, and violin solos by Mr. Henry Holmes. The performance of the choir

generally, and indeed of all concerned, was of the highest excellence, and, judging from the number of encores, which seemed the rule rather than the exception, conducted much to the pleasure of a numerous audience. To those, however, accustomed to the continuous interest of oratorio, symphonic or concerted classical chamber concerts, so fragmentary an entertainment—at which Wesley's glorious motett was the only work of extended interest presented—could not prove otherwise than wearisome. Nevertheless, it provided matter for reflection, and suggested the question, whether Mr. Leslie is right in treating madrigals, which were assuredly composed rather for the delectation of those who take part in performing them, than for the pleasure of those who listen to them, in the arbitrary manner he does. Handed down to us by their composers, like the instrumental works of the same period, without any marks of expression, is it right, for the sake of gaining sharp contrasts of forte and piano, to treat them by rule of thumb, and impart to them an expression other than that both music and text spontaneously demand? In his zeal Mr. Leslie seems to us to have gone beyond the mark in this matter; admirable practice as this overloading of his scores with marks of expression must be for his choir, in effect it is uncalled for and irritating.

MR. WALTER BACHE'S CONCERT.

MR. WALTER BACHE'S ninth annual concert, given at St. James's Hall, Feb. 28th, with a band of 83 performers and a chorus of 130 voices, was on a grander scale and more comprehensive in its interest than those of preceding years. All along it has been Mr. Bache's principal aim to advance the claims of his former master Liszt, in the hope of inducing the more influential of our concert-giving societies to bring forward his works. In England, unfortunately, concert-giving and the advancement of musical art are far from being synonymous. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that Mr. Bache's efforts in this direction have not been altogether crowned with success to the extent they deserve; nevertheless, we at least owe it to him that Liszt's pianoforte concerto was probably heard at the Crystal Palace at a much earlier date than it otherwise would have been, and that one of his "Symphonische Dichtungen," *Tasso*, is included in the scheme put forth for the ensuing season by the Philharmonic Society. In the present instance, Beethoven and three of the greatest of the composers that have followed him were adequately represented. Beethoven, by the choral march, "Twine ye the garlands," from the *Ruins of Athens*; Schumann, by his pianoforte concerto in A minor (Op. 54); Liszt, by the chorus of Reapers, from his music to Herder's *Prometheus*, and by his setting of the 13th psalm, for tenor, solo, chorus, and orchestra; and Wagner, by his "Huldigungs Marsch." Schumann's beautiful concerto, which in spite of its difficulties has at length become a favourite with the most advanced pianists, and has therefore been made tolerably familiar, was rendered by Mr. Bache in most masterly fashion, and admirably accompanied by the band under the able direction of Mr. Manns. That a pianist of such remarkable attainments, who certainly ranks among the first two or three of our resident pianists, either native or foreign, has not been heard elsewhere than at his own concerts, seems inexplicable, except upon the grounds of his own exclusiveness and independence, and is as much to be regretted as the fact that his concert only takes place once a year. This last regret was the more palpable in the case of Liszt's psalm; for one could not but feel that it seemed almost a waste of time, energy, and money to expend so much trouble, as it must have cost, upon bringing to a single hearing, without the prospect of an early repetition, a work of so reconducive a character, and one which but very few could appreciate without a previous acquaintance gained by conscientious study of the score. Liszt's treatment of this psalm is emotional and dramatic; his own account that he has rendered the first part of it *alt-testamentarisch* (in the spirit of the Old Testament), and the latter part *neu-testamentarisch* (in the spirit of the New Testament), is the best clue to a right understanding of it. As Mr. Dannreuther aptly expresses it in his explanatory programme of the work, the picture of the Psalmist at the head of his congregation rises before us with dramatic vividness; his passionate appeals and complaints, his trust and hope, his final conviction that he has been heard, and will find help, are presented with a dramatist's clearness and intensity, the chorus repeating the Psalmist's supplications, and the orchestra strengthening and enforcing them.

The performance of this remarkable work, in which the arduous tenor solo was admirably sustained by Mr. Henry Guy, was highly creditable to all concerned. That Mr. Bache, if no one else, may be induced to repeat it is much to be desired. No less acceptable and more to be "understanded of by the people" was the charmingly melodious chorus from Herder's *Prometheus*; this was unanimously re-demanded and repeated. Wagner's gorgeous "Huldigungs

Marsch," heard for the first time in England, and to which, as it is to be included in the next concert of the Wagner Society, we may revert, was by no means the least interesting item in Mr. Bache's admirable programme. As a relief to the more substantial fare of the evening's entertainment, songs were contributed by Miss Maudsley, Miss Sophie Ferrari, and Mr. Henry Guy; but these, with the exception of one, entitled "A Chain"—one of a set of six by C. Deichmann, lately reviewed in these columns, and by no means of a common order—were of no special interest.

WAGNER SOCIETY.

THE second concert, which took place at St. James's Hall, on the 6th ult., was even more successful than the first. Some of those who were present at the first concert expressed their surprise that Wagner's music should be so warmly received, but accounted for the fact by assuming that the audience was a picked one of individuals already more or less familiar with his music, adding that the true criterion of the attractiveness of his music for the general public would only be made apparent at the concert, given at popular prices of admission, at St. James's Hall. The result of this was most conclusive and convincing. The instrumental portion of the programme was the same as on the first occasion, of which we spoke in our last month's issue. The hall was crowded, the applause enthusiastic, but at the same time discriminative. The overture to *Tannhäuser*, superbly played, was so loudly applauded that it might fairly have been repeated; Mr. Dannreuther, however, passed on to the *Lohengrin* selection. Here the "Bridal" music and the introduction to the 3rd Act were so loudly applauded that it was impossible to resist a repetition of both. The overture to the *Meistersinger* was less warmly applauded, but this was not to be wondered at, for though of all Wagner's instrumental works it is the one most highly esteemed by those most deeply read in Wagner, it is only to be thoroughly appreciated after repeated hearings and study. On the first occasion of its performance in Paris, at one of M. Padeloup's concerts, it was actually hissed. M. Padeloup addressed the audience, saying he was not surprised at their not liking it, as it was far beyond their comprehension, and consequently it should be repeated at the following concert. Mr. Dannreuther had no occasion to do the like, but it will be well to repeat it on an early occasion. Herr Diener having returned to Cologne, the vocal music (the least satisfactory part of the evening's entertainment) was undertaken by Mlle. Girardi and Signor Garcia. The lady sang "Elizabeth's Prayer," from *Tannhäuser*, and Elsa's song, "Euch Lüften," from *Lohengrin*; and the gentleman gave (in English) Wolfram's song, from *Tannhäuser*, "O du mein holder Abendstern," and a couple of French songs, "Attente" and "Dors, mon Enfant," which belong to Wagner's early time in Paris, but which have lately been republished in Germany. As before, the Kaiser Marsch concluded the programme.

What is likely to prove of more importance than the success of this particular concert is the fact, which we have been authorised to state, that the day following it a sum of £1,200 was subscribed by certain of the audience, as a guarantee fund towards a series of ten similar concerts to be given next season. These will be on a more comprehensive scale, and with a chorus specially organised for the purpose.

We are enabled to add that the programme of the third "Wagner" concert, to be given at St. James's Hall on the 25th instant, will include the overture to *Der Fliegende Holländer*, the "Huldigungs Marsch," the introduction, Isolde's "Liebeslied," and the finale from *Tristan*; and, in deference to the wishes of those who experienced so much pleasure at the late concerts, a repetition of the overture to *Tannhäuser* and the selection from *Lohengrin*.

The plan adopted at these concerts of keeping the doors closed during the performance of each piece has been attended with the happiest results, and, where practicable, is one strongly to be commended.

PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.

THOUGH Sir Michael Costa, by making it one of the conditions of their engagement in the orchestra of Her Majesty's Opera, Drury Lane, that they shall not play at the Philharmonic Society's concerts, has deprived the society of the services of some twenty of its late members, the band brought forward at the first concert of the sixty-first season seemed in no way inferior to that of last year; indeed, we are so well off for skilled instrumentalists in London, that if Sir M. Costa had induced the whole band to revolt, there would have been no great difficulty in forming another equally good. The progressive policy maintained by Mr. W. G. Cousins during the six years of his conductorship was never more apparent than at present. During the season in addition to the usual round of works by Beethoven, Haydn, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Spohr, Bennett, &c., C. P. E. Bach's

symphony in D, Liszt's poème symphonique, "Tasso," and Brahms's "Requiem" will be heard for the first time in this country; and for the first time at these concerts G. A. Macfarren's violin concerto (MS.) and overture to *St. John the Baptist* (MS.), Schumann's overture to *Manfred*, Wagner's overture to *Der Fliegende Holländer*, Berlioz's "Le Carnaval Romain," Gluck's overture to *Iphigenia in Aulis* (with Wagner's ending), &c. Unlike our operatic managers, the directors of the Philharmonic Society do not promise more than they are able and intend to perform. It is probably owing to this fact, as well as to their liberal promises, and more than usually advanced tendencies, that the subscription list for the ensuing season is the largest on record. The programme of this first concert was a rich one, and the performance by the band on the whole highly satisfactory. Schumann's "Overture, Scherzo, and Finale," Op. 52, though not so designated by him, might fairly rank as a symphony; and, though not up to the mark of either of his four symphonies, is a remarkably pleasing and agreeable work. It was composed in 1841, and therefore belongs to the same period as his first symphony in B flat, the symphony in D minor (No. 4), and the pianoforte concerto, but both of which were subsequently remodelled. Mendelssohn's pianoforte concerto (No. 1) in G minor was played by Signor Alfonso Rendano, but in a scrambling and by no means satisfactory manner. Beethoven's overture in C, "Die Weihe des Hauses," Op. 124, written for the opening of a theatre, but more suitable for the consecration of a cathedral, was a rare treat. To our thinking, it is only second, if indeed it is so, to the great "Leonore, No. 3;" but this is a point upon which, perhaps on account of its serious character, critics do not agree. The remaining instrumental works were Beethoven's symphony in B flat (No. 4), and Gounod's overture to *Le Médecin malgré Lui*. The vocalists were Mlle. Olivia Girardi and Mr. Edward Lloyd. The lady comes to us from America, with a great reputation as an opera singer, with a repertoire of thirty operas at her command. As a concert singer she is far from agreeable. Her songs were the scena and aria "Berenice, ove sei," from Gluck's *Lucio Vero*, scored for orchestra by Mr. W. G. Cousins, and the romanza "Ei dee venir," from Halévy's *L'Ebreu*, or *La Juive*, as it is better known—an opera first played in Paris in 1835, and which, as Mr. Macfarren relates in the programme of the evening, was most successfully produced at Drury Lane Theatre in the autumn of the same year, in English, but with the omission of almost all the music, adding that it was less attractive when given in Italian at Covent Garden, in 1851. Mr. Lloyd sang but once; his song was the aria, "Dalla sua pace," from Mozart's *Il Don Giovanni*. He sang it neatly, but would have been heard to better advantage if the accompaniment had been more subdued.

The next concert, on the 2nd inst., will be principally choral, the programme including Brahms's *Requiem*, Op. 45, and Mendelssohn's *Walpurgis Night*.

MADAME SCHUMANN'S RECITALS.

THE first of two recitals of pianoforte music, given by Mme. Schumann, at St. James's Hall on the 5th ult., proved so attractive that the announcement of two more was at once put forth. On no former occasion has this unrivalled pianiste been playing more finely than on her present visit, and never has she been more widely and thoroughly appreciated. Though but the well-deserved reward of her perseverance, for which the musical public cannot be too grateful, it must be a real satisfaction to her to contrast the numerous and enthusiastic audiences of to-day with the scanty but perhaps faithful band of admirers which used to meet at the Hanover Square Rooms on the occasion of her earlier visits to England. No less satisfactory must it be to her to mark the altered tone of the public criticism of to-day as compared with that of the former period, so cruelly depreciative of her playing and her husband's music. The selections of music she has brought forward have been varied and well chosen. She has given us a fair amount of Schumann's music, but certainly not too much. The list included his enormously difficult and clever "Études en forme de Variations," Op. 13, a couple of the "Phantasies," Op. 12—viz., "Aufschwung" and "Warum," the "Scherzino" from Op. 26, No. 1 of the "Nachtstücke," the romanza in F sharp, Op. 28, the canon in B minor, from Op. 56, and selections from the "Carnaval Scenes" and the "Davidsbündler." All seemed to be thoroughly appreciated, and several were re-demanded. Schubert was represented by his sonata in B flat (posthumous), the fantasia in G, Op. 78, and the two "Moments Musicaux," in C sharp minor and F minor. On no previous occasion has the remarkable beauty of these sonatas been brought before us in so strong a light. The impressive and yet unexaggerated manner in which they were rendered was nothing less than a revelation. In Mendelssohn's variations in E flat, Op. 82, and capriccio in E major, Op. 33, in Chopin's Nocturne in G minor, as well as in the severer schools of Bach and Scarlatti, as represented by the so-called "Italian" concerto, and Partita, in G major of the former,

and by an andante and presto of the latter, Mme. Schumann seemed equally at home. At the first of these recitals a young lady violinist, Mlle. Friese, was heard for the first time, and made a very favourable impression by her performance of the adagio from Spohr's Ninth Concerto. Songs, chiefly by Schubert, Schumann, and Mendelssohn, were contributed at each recital successively by Mmes. Sauerbrey, Lavrowska, and Otto Alvsleben.

MONDAY POPULAR CONCERTS.

MME. SCHUMANN and Herr Joachim, who have been "guesting it" among us (if we may so anglicise the German equivalent), have been the principal source of attraction at these concerts during the last month. It is due to their influence that several new or seldom heard works have been brought forward. The only living composer whose claims both these great artists seem most anxious to assert is Herr Brahms. That he holds a high place, if not the highest, among those composers of the present day who still adhere to established forms is unquestionable. The works by this composer, who now seems fairly to be making his way in England, brought forward by Mme. Schumann were the two "Ballads," in D major and B minor, Nos. 2 and 3 of four pieces, Op. 10. Though they belong to an early period of his career, their pleasing character and striking originality at once arrest attention, and stamp them as the works of a composer of no common order of mind. At Herr Joachim's instigation, Brahms's sextett in B flat, Op. 18, for strings, which had only been heard here on one previous occasion some years ago, was again introduced. The enthusiasm it evoked on the present occasion, as contrasted with the cold reception accorded to it on its first hearing at these concerts, may fairly be adduced as a proof of the growth of the appreciative powers of Mr. Chappell's audience. So well did it please, that it should be followed at an early date by the same composer's similar work in G, Op. 36, which on its late introduction at one of Mr. Henry Holmes's "Musical Evenings" made a very favourable impression, and in some points is the more interesting work of the two. To Herr Joachim we are also indebted for a hearing of Beethoven's quartett in C sharp minor, Op. 132. Mr. Chappell has often been urged to bring Beethoven's posthumous quartetts to a hearing, and as often has it been retorted, "What's the good? no one will understand them." Understood or not, a hearing of this remarkable and seldom played work was a rare treat to musicians, and seemed equally pleasurable to the audience generally. Besides Brahms's "Ballads," among the most important of Mme. Schumann's solos, have been Beethoven's famous "Waldstein" sonata (Op. 53), and Bach's prelude and fugue in E minor (for organ), a transcription of which by E. Blackshaw, is published by Augener & Co. Her spirited playing—in company with MM. Joachim, Ries, Straus, and Piatti—in Schumann's quintett in E flat, Op. 44, the most popular of all Schumann's works for the chamber, and which of late years has become as attractive a one as any in the "Monday Popular" repertoire, should not be passed over without recognition. Herr Joachim, who always seems to think less of himself than of the music in hand, has not been heard as a soloist so often as he might have been. Nothing could exceed the perfection of his rendering of Bach's "Chaconne," and the adagio from Spohr's concerto in G minor, Op. 28. On each occasion he was loudly recalled, and appropriately substituted, in the one instance, a prelude by Bach, and in the other a barcarolle by Spohr. On one evening Miss Agnes Zimmermann was the pianist. Her choice of a *suite de pièces* (in G minor), by Handel, for her solo was not an unwelcome variety from the regulation sonata. She was heard also to advantage, with MM. Joachim and Piatti, in Mendelssohn's trio in D minor, Op. 49. Among the vocalists there have been Mme. Lavrowska, Mr. E. Lloyd, and Mr. Santley.

Mr. Kuhe's annual festival at Brighton took place during the month of February. Owing to a misunderstanding, our report did not arrive till our last number had gone to press. The principal works performed were the following:—*Oratorios, Cantatas, &c.*: *Elijah*, *Judas Maccabaeus*, *The Last Judgment*, Costa's *Eli*, Bennett's *Woman of Samaria*, Sullivan's *Tempest* music (the last three works conducted by their respective composers), and Miss Gabriel's cantata, "Evangeline," written expressly for the festival. *Orchestral Works*: Beethoven's symphony in D, Mozart's in E flat, Haydn's in G (letter V), Spohr's *Power of Sound*, Mendelssohn's Scotch symphony, Benedict's scherzo, *A Tale of Fairyland* (conducted by the composer), the overtures to *Fidelio*, *Oberon*, *Figaro*, *Ruy Blas*, and *Zauberflöte*, and the entr'acte to *Lohengrin*. Mr. Kuhe played Mendelssohn's concerto in D minor, Mozart's in C, Moscheles' in G minor, Liszt's arrangement of Weber's polacca in E, and Hummel's

septett. Mr. Carrodus played Spohr's *Scena Cantante*, Molique's concerto in A, and (with Mr. Burnett) Mozart's double concerto for violin and viola. The principal vocalists were Mmes. Edith Wynne, Carola, Lancia, Patey, Enriquez, and Julia Elton, Messrs. Vernon Rigby, Cummings, Lloyd, G. Perren, Foli, Lewis Thomas, and Santley. The conductors were Mr. F. Kingsbury and Mr. Kuhe.

The last of the present series of Mr. Ridley Prentice's excellent concerts at Brixton took place on the 11th ult. The principal works performed were Mr. G. A. Macfarren's quintett in G minor for piano and strings, Weber's sonata in C, played by Mr. Prentice, who was deservedly recalled, Marcello's violoncello sonata in G minor (Signor Pezze), and Haydn's quartett in F, Op. 77, No. 2. We are glad to learn that these concerts have been pecuniarily successful, and wish Mr. Prentice all encouragement in his efforts for the diffusion of good music.

Mr. Aptommas, the eminent harpist, gave a "harp recital" at the Beethoven Rooms on the 5th ult.; this being his first appearance in London since his return from Germany. By his masterly execution of his solos, especially in a grand fantasia by Alvars, and his own transcriptions of national airs, the concert-giver proved that the universally enthusiastic tone of the foreign press on the occasion of his recent foreign tour was not unwarranted. We doubt, however, the expediency of playing Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" on the harp, while freely admitting that Mr. Aptommas does all that can be done with it under the circumstances.

Madame Eugene Oswald gave a concert at St. George's Hall on the 20th ult., assisted in the instrumental department by Messrs. H. Holmes, Daubert, and T. H. Wright. Mme. Oswald's excellent playing was heard to advantage in Beethoven's trio in C minor, Chopin's polonaise in C (with violoncello), Schubert's fantasia in C, Op. 15, and Liszt's transcription of the "Spinnerlied," from the *Fliegende Holländer*. The gentlemen associated with her also gave solos on their respective instruments. The vocal music was of inferior quality.

At Herr Pieczonka's second recital at the Victoria Hall, on March 7th, that gentleman performed Beethoven's sonata "Appassionata," Weber's "Moto Continuo," a portion of Hummel's septett (accompanied on a second piano), and various short solos. Mmes. Sauerbrey and Baum were the vocalists.

Musical Notes.

THE second of two excellent chamber concerts was given at Bradford, by Herr Wolff, on the 6th ult., at which Herr Joachim, Herr Kummer, and Signor Piatti assisted. The principal features of the programme were Beethoven's quartett in E flat, Op. 16, a part of the same composer's serenade-trio, Op. 8, and Schumann's seldom heard, trio in F, Op. 80.

MR. SEPTIMUS PARKER, the resident professor of music at Epsom, is giving a subscription series of classical concerts in that town. The first two took place on the morning and evening of the 20th ult., when the chief works given were Beethoven's quartett in G, Op. 18, No. 2, Dussek's sonata in B flat for piano and violin, Mendelssohn's trio in C minor, Haydn's quartett in D, Op. 64, No. 5, Beethoven's sonata in A, Op. 69, for piano and violoncello, and Mozart's piano quartett in G minor. The string quartetts were excellently played by Messrs. T. Watson, A. Reynolds, E. Deane, and R. Reed (all members of the Crystal Palace Band); the pianist was Mr. E. Prout, and the vocalist Mr. W. Winn.

A VERY interesting performance of chamber music took place at Birmingham on the 21st ult. The day being the 188th anniversary of the birth of Seb. Bach, the programme was entirely selected from that composer's works, and comprised his concertos for three pianos in D minor and C major, the concerto in D for piano, flute and violin, a sonata for piano and violin, a suite for violin solo, another for violoncello, and solos for piano. The performers were Messrs. Ludwig, Jung, Priestley, Vieuxtemps, Moreton, Sturges, Dr. C. Heap, A. Trickett, and S. S. Stratton.

HERR E. PAUER gave the first of three lectures on the "History of the Oratorio," at the Exeter Hall, on the 19th ult. We hope in our next Number to present our readers with some account of the lectures, the pressure on our space this month necessitating its postponement.

IN noticing the annual "Reid Concert," at Edinburgh, in our last issue, we should have added that it was followed by two others. The omission was due to the fact that the programme of the "Reid" concert alone reached our office. Under Professor

Oakeley, the annual "Reid" Concert seems to have grown into a festival, and that an orchestral one. The idea of instituting orchestral festivals is one heartily to be applauded; it is saddening to see the splendid orchestras brought together at the Birmingham and our other festivals, set down to play only accompaniments. May the managers of these take a lesson from Professor Oakeley!

We are glad to see from the Edinburgh papers that Professor Oakeley is sufficiently recovered from his serious accident of last year to go on with his organ recitals. The *Daily Review* of the 14th ult. says:—Yesterday afternoon Professor Oakeley performed on the organ in the music class-room, in the presence of a large audience of the students and their friends, when he displayed all his wonted power. The programme was as follows:—

Andante Maestoso, Allegro—Organ Concerto, No. 2)	Handel.
Air—"Angels, ever bright and fair" (Theodora)....	Beethoven.
Adagio Cantabile, Menuetto e Trio—Septett.....	G. Merkel.
Andante—Organ Fantasia, Op. 5	Pleyel.
Adagio—Symphony, Op. 12	Chopin.
Marche Funèbre—P. F. Sonata, Op. 23 (edited by Liszt) ..	Gluck.
Gavotte—"Iphigenia in Aulis" (by request).....	F. E. Bach.
Andante—Allegro Marziale—(for organ).....	

MR. THOMAS OLIPHANT, for many years connected with the Madrigal Society, first as Secretary and subsequently as President, died on the 9th ult., in the 74th year of his age.

As neither of the opera houses promises the production of *Lohengrin* this year, it will be satisfactory to the many who take an interest in Wagner's music to hear that Dr. Wylde intends giving a concert performance of the entire opera at St. James's Hall. Though much will necessarily be lost from the absence of the stage accessories, the work in question will suffer far less from a merely musical recital than the composer's late operas, such, for instance, as the *Meistersinger*, or any of the "Nibelungen" dramas.

THE recent concerts of the Wagner Society have created great enthusiasm in many of the members of the orchestra. As an amusing illustration of this, we may mention that one of our best and best-known instrumentalists having had a son born to him on the day of the rehearsal for the concert, has commemorated the event by naming the child "Edward Dannreuther Wagner P—."

MISS S. F. HEILBRON, the well-known and talented young pianist, is about to make a Continental tour, and intends giving a farewell concert previous to her departure.

MR. FRITZ HARTVIGSON has been officially appointed pianist to H.R.H. the Princess of Wales.

ORGAN APPOINTMENT.—Mr. R. B. Bateman, of the Parish Church, Penrith, to be organist and choirmaster of the Parish Church, Aylesbury, Bucks, and choirmaster of the Vale of Aylesbury Church Choral Association.

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